

Item #3 - Service Level of Sites and Facilities

Evaluation Objectives: To evaluate site and area facilities to determine if full-service level management are being achieved.

Methods: Evaluation of field observations, forest budgets and Recreation Facility Master Planning (RSFMP) process.

Evaluation: Full Service Level (FSL) is a management term that was utilized in 1986; however the current terminology to describe service levels is “managed to standard”. Managed to Standard is a national process in which the forest provides recreation site information of all the developed sites that can be managed to established standards.

In 2006 the Flathead National Forest went through the recreation site facility master plan process (RSFMP) which has developed into the recreation facility analysis (RFA). As a result of this process, the forest established the Flathead’s recreational niche as best represented by the following focal areas: “Water, Wilderness & Wildlife”. This niche statement provides a general theme to guide our recreation focus but still allows for a wide variety of recreational opportunities, and serves to guide the focus of our recreation management efforts on those resources that we excel in and can provide to our forest visitor.

In this process, the forest ranked developed sites against how well they fit the forest niche and how they met budgetary limitations. The RFA ranked every developed site on the forest according to percent occupancy, fees generated, meeting federal accessibility standards requirements, historic status and forest niche. In this process, the Flathead National Forest identified it could maintain 87 of the 94 developed sites on the forest to standard. To date the forest has converted 3 of the 7 sites that cannot be managed according to standard will be decommissioned and become dispersed sites with few improvements.

The Recreation Facility Analysis is a working road map to guide the forest in providing a quality, sustainable recreation sites program. It describes the vision for the overall forest recreation program and outlines proposals specific to individual developed recreation sites.

The Flathead National Forest is surrounded by lands managed by other land management agencies such as Glacier National Park, Department of Natural Resources, State forest, state, county and city parks. These other recreation providers focus on higher development type sites which allows the Flathead NF to focus our niche towards the lesser-developed side of the development scale.

Recommended Actions: Continue to maintain and reconstruct campgrounds and developed sites on schedule per Recreation Facility Analysis. Review and update Recreation Facility Analysis. The Forest will also participate in the competitive capital investment program in Region One to reconstruct and renovate campgrounds. There are four campground projects that have been proposed in the next 5 year cycle.